Peer Support: Directions For The 1990's

AADAC
Policy and
Program
Analysis

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commi
An Agency of the Government of Alberta

Peer Support: Directions for the 1990s

(Sandy) Alexander Roy Smoliak
Policy and Program Analysis

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
An Agency of the Government of Alberta
November 1991

75/8.95/91 (c)

92-07394/

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY iii

1. INTRODUCTION 1
   - 1.1 Background 1
   - 1.2 Purpose 2
   - 1.3 Scope 2
   - 1.4 Definition of Terms 2

2. METHODOLOGY 3
   - 2.1 Methods 3
   - 2.2 Procedures 3
   - 2.3 Design and Instruments 3
   - 2.4 Limitations of the Survey 4

3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION 5
   - 3.1 Provincial Results 5
     - 3.1.1 Provincial Overview 5
     - 3.1.2 Program Facilitators 6
     - 3.1.3 Team Recruitment and Membership 8
     - 3.1.4 Training and Activities 11
     - 3.1.5 Resources and Support 13
     - 3.1.6 Schools Without Peer Support 14
   - 3.2 Regional Results 16

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 19
   - 4.1 Conclusions 19
   - 4.2 Recommendations 20

APPENDIX A: List of Schools with Active Peer Support Programs
APPENDIX B: Peer Support Program Questionnaire
APPENDIX C: Peer Support Facilitator Comments

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Years of Program Operation	5
2.	How Facilitators Learned of Peer Support	6
3.	Facilitator Training Received	7
4.	Facilitator Training Desired	7
5.	Amount of Time Spent on Program	8
6.	Method of Team Recruitment	9
7.	Peer Support Team Membership	10
8.	Peer Support Membership by Gender	10
9.	Method of Team Training	11
10.	Method of Team Promotion	12
11.	Type of Ongoing Activities	12
12.	Training Materials and Resources	13
13.	Sources of Operational Funding	14
14.	Peer Support Programs by Region	16
15.	Peer Support Programs by Area Office	17

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Peer Support is a program intended to provide adolescents with an opportunity to assist fellow students to deal with normal developmental challenges. AADAC has been involved in the development of this prevention oriented peer program, the communication about the program in the education community, direct funding and support of Peer Support networks and the development of resource materials in support of the program. The program has been active in Alberta schools for ten years. It is widely adopted and is showing rapid growth by all accounts.

Although the program is widely accepted across the province, little information is available on how prevalent the program is or how the program has been implemented in Alberta schools. More than one thousand schools offering instruction from grades 7 to 12 were contacted by mail and asked to complete a questionnaire in May and June of 1991. Although certain constraints resulted in a limited response rate, 457 questionnaires were completed and returned to provide a response rate of more than forty-four percent.

The study has four objectives and highlights of the major findings for each objective are presented below:

1. To determine what Peer Support programs are currently active in the province.

The study identified more than 200 programs currently active in the province. A number of programs were on line and being planned for the upcoming school term.

* More than half of the programs surveyed have been in operation for two years or less, and nearly three quarters have been in operation for four years or less.

* Almost all Peer Support programs surveyed are extracurricular in nature--very few programs are offered for academic credit.

* More than half of the programs identified serve junior high grades 7 to 9.

* In total, the survey identified more than 3,400 active student participants serving as Peer Support team members in Alberta.

2. To determine how Peer Support programs are operated.

A considerable degree of variation appears to exist in how the program is operated in Alberta schools. Nevertheless, the following information was obtained from those programs surveyed:

Recruitment & Membership

* Almost two-thirds of Peer Support teams have 15 members or less involved in

activities.

* Most teams are mainly composed of female students, as male students are not involved in the program to any great extent.

* Most team members appear to be new members recruited each year, and very few students return from a previous year to carry on their roles as team members.

* The most common method of team recruitment are by student application, teaching staff referral, classroom visitations, word of mouth, and posters.

Training & Activities

* The most commonly used methods of promotion include word of mouth, posters, classroom visitations, and public address announcements.

* Orientation for students is most frequently in the form of training retreats, weekly training, and training/activities combined.

* The most frequently reported activities include informal support, informal counselling, school spirit, new student orientation, and fundraising.

* Three-quarters of programs make students available through working the halls and classrooms in outreach activities.

Resources & Support

* Peer Support training materials and resources used in the program are varied, but AADAC materials are cited most frequently.

* A number of resources and materials are developed by instructors, networks and students for use locally.

* Two-fifths of programs surveyed belong to a formal Peer Support network, and more than half rely on informal support systems or support from within the school system.

* Financial support, in the form of operational funding, usually comes from AADAC, the schools, or fundraising events.

3. To determine who is involved in the operation of Peer Support.

The survey identified and described the main participants involved in Peer Support of those programs surveyed.

* Most facilitators are either teachers or school counsellors, although other participants from the school and from the community at large were also actively

involved in the program.

* Most facilitators have had some type of formal Peer Support training. AADAC training was cited by two-thirds of respondents.

* Facilitators first found out about the Peer Support program through another facilitator or through word of mouth.

* Facilitators would like to have additional training in the areas of advanced Peer Support training and special topics' workshops.

* A majority of facilitators stated they did not receive formal recognition for the work that they do.

4. To examine how AADAC is involved in the implementation of the program.

The survey confirmed that AADAC's current role in providing resources, facilitator training and consultation, and initial funding for Peer Support is vital to the program's survival.

* AADAC's Peer Support program package is widely used by program facilitators for team training and program development.

* AADAC training for program facilitators is identified as an important component in program implementation and development.

* AADAC is viewed as an important source for operational funding of the program.

* AADAC's role is generally perceived to be extremely favorable according to respondents, particularly the efforts of AADAC's field staff in their consultative role.

There are three major conclusions which can be drawn from the study. First, the program is undergoing rapid growth and will continue to do so in the future. The viability of these programs, however, will be determined by the resources and support made available to them by AADAC or by some other interested agency.

Second, there is a need at the program level for greater information and advice on an ongoing basis about Peer Support, about new techniques and innovations, and about what goes on in other programs. Although AADAC field staff and regional networks provide some of this information, it needs to be enhanced to make programs more successful once they have been established.

Third, although individual programs are encouraged to take ownership of Peer Support using AADAC as a resource, it is clear that a more proactive role is required to link programs together, to identify common needs, and to resolve common problems.

Based upon the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

Recommendation #1: AADAC should continue its present involvement in and support of Peer Support.

Recommendation #2: AADAC should enhance its efforts to promote Peer Support in Alberta secondary schools.

Recommendation #3: AADAC should encourage program stability by addressing certain ongoing support needs such as training opportunities and funding alternatives.

Recommendation #4: AADAC should establish a mechanism to communicate with all active Peer Support programs.

Recommendation #5: AADAC should encourage the integration of Peer Support programs through support of local and regional networks.

Recommendation #6: AADAC should suggest approaches to recruit more males as team members.

Recommendation #7: AADAC should clarify the difference between support and counselling.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Peer Support is a program intended to provide adolescents with an opportunity to assist fellow students in dealing with their normal developmental challenges. It is believed to be a sound method of prevention of alcohol and other drug abuse in youth. AADAC's involvement in Peer Support is intended to help develop healthy lifestyle choices among adolescents. The program has much potential to enhance personal growth and development in adolescents and in fostering a positive school environment.

This program has been active in Alberta schools for at least ten years, due in part to funding by AADAC and other organizations. Peer Support is a program which has been widely adopted and showing rapid growth by all accounts, yet very little solid information is known about how widespread the program is in Alberta or how the program is being implemented.

AADAC produced Peer Support resource materials to encourage the development of the program in junior and senior high schools. Both Peer Support: Teacher's Resource (1986) and Peer Support: Designing Interpersonal Skills (1989) are widely used in the province for program development and for training team members.

There has been one previous study in the area of Peer Support in Alberta which examined the program in any detail. The study, "An Assessment of Calgary and Surrounding Area Peer Support and the Role of AADAC Community Education Services (CES) in Regard to Peer Support," (Denise LeClaire, 1989) was limited to Calgary and area schools and sought to describe Peer Support programs which had already been identified. Its purpose was to examine issues within Peer Support in general and to examine AADAC's role within the program. There has been no equivalent examination of Peer Support across the province.

It is clear that with the tremendous growth of the program in the past decade, and the expected expansion of the program in the future, further study is necessary in two areas. First, an assessment of what is presently happening in Peer Support is necessary to identify the prevalence of Peer Support programming in the province. Second, an understanding of how Peer Support programs operate will provide needed information for future planning and will help determine what AADAC's role in Peer Support should be.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the study is to identify and describe the existence of Peer Support programs in Alberta. The study asks program facilitators about the presence and nature of these programs. The study's objective is one of description--it is to identify and enumerate all active Peer Support programs and to develop baseline data about the ways in which they are implemented. The study is not to serve as an evaluation of existing programs. The primary task of this study, therefore, is to ask "What is out there"?

1.3 Scope

The scope of the study is limited to school-based Peer Support programs operating in Alberta at the present time. The following research questions provided the basis for developing the questionnaire as well as provided an outline for the data analysis.

1) What Peer Support programs are currently active in the province?
2) How are the Peer Support programs operated?
3) Who is involved in the operation of Peer Support?
4) How is AADAC involved in the implementation of the program?

The scope of the study is to identify the prevalence, describe the process, and identify participants involved in Peer Support at this time. The study also intends to identify the role of AADAC at present and determine what role it should play. These questions will direct the focus of the study in the design and execution of the project.

1.4 Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms have been defined:

An active **Peer Support Program** is defined as a volunteer based youth group in junior or senior high school which provides opportunities to participate in developing and initiating projects to improve the experience of other peers. These programs are "active" if they have a current membership of students involved in program activities during the 1990-91 school year. For the purposes of this study there is only one program per school, although it is recognized that some schools do operate separate junior and senior teams.

A **School** is defined by the parameters of Alberta Education, and includes all sites in which educational instruction of grades 7-12 are conducted. This includes some schools which also provide instruction at other levels (including elementary and certain post secondary institutions).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Methods

The population under study includes all schools in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12 in the province. All of the province's school based Peer Support programs (in grades 7-12) are to be identified through contact with the program facilitators primarily involved with supervision of the program.

The sampling frame for the questionnaire was obtained through Alberta Education, which provided a list of 1,026 schools for our study purposes. Since the study is specific to junior and senior high school based programs, elementary schools and other community based programs have been excluded. It is assumed that no schools in the province have been omitted from consideration in the study. In fact, schools which do not likely have adolescent alcohol and drug prevention programs, but provide instruction in grades 7-12, have been included. These include such schools as community colleges, correctional centres, and Hutterite colony schools.

Of 1026 questionnaires mailed out, four hundred and fifty-seven were completed and returned. This provided a response rate of more than 44%.

2.2 Procedures

Policy and Program Analysis provided research consultation and technical expertise to the Manager, Program Resources. Input was solicited from a working group of AADAC staff actively involved with Peer Support across the province. The study procedures were designed to gather basic data on existing programs in the province prior to the end of the 1990-91 school year. An important consideration in the design of the study, therefore, was to keep the study simple to administer given the project's timelines.

Data collection took place during May and June of 1991. Although it was not the most opportune time for school staff to surrender additional time from their schedules to complete a questionnaire, the timing of the study was necessitated to capture data before the end of the school year. A follow-up postcard was sent to all schools shortly after the initial mailout to act as a reminder and to provide those who had not received a questionnaire package as a means to obtain one. As well, telephone support was provided to respond to any inquiries by the schools regarding the questionnaire.

2.3 Design and Instruments

The study was conducted as part of a one-stage, single instrument design. The data collection method, a self-administered mail out approach, was chosen because it was the most feasible. Considering the size of the sample, the geographic dispersion of the sample, and the timelines to complete the study, any other method of data capture was deemed impractical.

The questionnaire was designed to be relatively short and focused. The objective was to limit the amount of written responses required to reduce the time it takes to complete the questionnaire. The design also sought to focus the respondent to a particular time frame, a "snapshot" of the present, to avoid the problems associated with staff turnover, incomplete or incorrect records, imperfect recall of events, or lost data.

The Peer Support Program Questionnaire, at six pages, consists largely of multiple choice questions in which respondents select items from a list to describe their programs (Appendix B). Most of the information was readily available by memory or through basic Peer Support records kept by the program facilitator. In addition to identifying where programs currently exist and who is involved in them, the questions are intended to describe the program's recruitment, training, activities, resources, and funding sources.

2.4 Limitations of the Survey

Areas of possible methodological concern include the use of the sampling frame as supplied by Alberta Education, problems associated with the timing of the study, and the awareness of Peer Support programs by school staff. In each case, however, an attempt was made to address these concerns in the design of the study.

First, the Alberta Education definition of "school" may not be entirely suitable for the purposes of this study. In particular, the inclusion of adult education centres in the sampling frame is inappropriate in a study of adolescent prevention programs.

Second, the timing of the study may have adversely affected the survey's response rate. It is understood that other responsibilities may take priority over a school survey administered in May and June.

Third, there is a possibility that the school's administrative secretary who received the questionnaire mail-out package may not be fully informed or aware of the existence of Peer Support in their school, or that respondents may not consider their Peer Counselling or Peer Helper programs to be the same thing.

3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 Provincial Results

3.1.1 Provincial Overview

Peer Support in Alberta appears to be a program growing in popularity as shown by the responses to the questionnaire. The program is widely known throughout the province as an effective method of prevention and has been widely implemented in Alberta schools. The study identified 204 currently active Peer Support programs, in both urban and rural schools, and in all areas of the province (Appendix A lists schools with active Peer Support programs). One in every five schools, or 19.8% of the sample of 1,026, were identified as having an active program. More surprising, however, was not the existence of these programs but the number of schools who stated they were thinking about adopting Peer Support in their schools.

There is much variation in how programs operate throughout the province. Some programs strictly follow the Peer Support manual and rarely vary from it, with set team membership numbers, very structured training and specifically scheduled activities. Other teams are very loosely structured with loose membership and informal instruction, who conduct general outreach activities as required. Peer Support programs appear to vary in terms of the extent of their profile within the school community, the awareness of these services and the utilization of services by students. There is also a considerable difference in terms of program resources, support, and how these programs are funded.

Current Peer Support programs have been in operation for an average of 3 years, ranging from 1 to 15 years. More than half of the programs surveyed have been in operation for two years or less, and nearly three quarters have been in operation for four years or less (Table 1). Most programs (51.7%) serve grades 7 to 9, while 22.9% of programs primarily serve grades 10 to 12. An additional 18.4% of programs serve both

Table 1: Years of Program Operation

Years of Operation	Number (N=197)	Percent
1 year	58	29.4%
2 years	51	25.9%
3 years	25	12.7%
4 years	13	6.6%
5 years	24	12.2%
more than 5 years	26	13.1%

junior and senior high grades 7 to 12, and 7% serve other grade levels. Programs have been identified in elementary, college, and alternative site programs captured in the sampling frame.

3.1.2 Program Facilitators

Program facilitiators are those teachers, counsellors, and others who are involved in the training and supervision of Peer Support team members. The importance of the facilitator's role in recruitment, training, monitoring activities and overall program development cannot be overstated. The role of facilitator is not gender specific and appears to be shared by men and women alike in Alberta schools. As well, it appears that the facilitator role is often supported by one or two co-facilitators within the school (in some instances as many as four or five program contacts were identified).

It appears that facilitators first learn of the Peer Support program in a number of ways. As shown in Table 2, another facilitator (49.8%) and word of mouth (44.8%) are the most predominant sources of information. It is interesting to note that personal contacts are cited more often than organizations or printed media. As the nature of a field initiated program would suggest, very few educational organizations provide information to promote Peer Support as a school program. AADAC is not cited as a major source of information about the program according to facilitators.

Table 2: How Facilitators Learned of Peer Support

Method	Percent
another facilitator	49.8%
word of mouth	44.8%
teacher's conferences, conventions	27.9%
letter, newsletter, posted notice	20.9%
school administration	17.4%
Peer Support activities in your school	10.9%
school board	6.5%
other	23.9%

Most Peer Support facilitators have had some type of formal training (Table 3). AADAC training was cited by 63.2% of respondents. There were 28.4% of respondents who were taught by an experienced facilitator, and 24.9% state they were self taught to function in their role. A number had Peer Support training in university, particularly from the University of Victoria and from the University of Prince Edward Island. Some have had more general training in counselling and guidance courses. Only 15.4% stated they had no training prior to their participation with the Peer Support program.

Table 3: Facilitator Training Received

Training received	Percent
AADAC training	63.2%
taught by an experienced facilitator	28.4%
self-trained	24.9%
no training	15.4%
other	15.9%

A majority of facilitators stated they would like to have additional training. As indicated in Table 4, advanced Peer Support training (60.8%) and special topics' workshops (57.8%) were mentioned most frequently by respondents. Certification was cited by 34.2%, program implementation was cited by 24.1%, and 23.1% indicated general Peer Support training to be of particular interest. Only 8% stated they desired no additional training.

Table 4: Facilitator Training Desired

Training desired	Percent
advanced Peer Support training	60.8%
special topics' workshops	57.8%
certification	34.2%
program implementation	24.1%
general Peer Support training	23.1%
no further training	8.0%
other	2.5%

Most facilitators (58.4%) stated they did not receive recognition for their work as Peer Support team leaders. Of those who did state they received formal recognition, it was usually in the form of extracurricular benefits from the school or acknowledgements of appreciation from their local AADAC office. It may well be, however, that recognition is not an issue and facilitators will be involved in the program regardless of benefits received.

Most facilitators (56.3%) stated they spend 1 to 2 hours in an average week on Peer Support, although this may vary according to the time of year. Demands on time are usually greater in initial recruitment and training than during ongoing activities and supervision later in the school year. Another 29.6% stated they spent 3 hours or more on an average week. Only 14.1% spend less than one hour each week involved with the program (Table 5).

Table 5: Amount of Time Spent on Program

Hours per week	Percent
less than 1 hour	14.1%
1-2 hours	56.3%
3-4 hours	23.4%
5-6 hours	5.2%
more than six hours	1.0%

3.1.3 Team Recruitment and Membership

The recruitment process looks for those students which provide a representative cross-section of the school population to make services more accessible to various student groups. The selection of team members, moreover, not only looks for those who will be most effective in a helping role, but also seeks those who will most likely benefit themselves from training and activities as Peer Support members.

Program facilitators usually recruit their Peer Support team members in a number of ways (Table 6). More than 80% of programs have students apply to the team directly. Other popular methods include referral from teaching staff (61.7%), classroom visitations (61.2%), word of mouth referral from students (58.2%), and posters (56.7%). A number of programs also recruit team members by some form of student nominations.

Only 2.5% of those who responded stated their programs did not conduct some sort of recruitment activity to maintain team membership from year to year. It is uncertain whether this is due to an abundance of student volunteers or an alternate selection method which precludes the need for team member recruitment.

Almost all (95.5%) Peer Support programs surveyed are extracurricular in nature--very few programs are offered as academic credit. Some schools, in addition to a large informal group of students on an extracurricular basis, have a small group of students receiving academic credit, but these are rare exceptions.

Membership is as varied as the number of programs--some have a very structured team selected from each grade while others have a loosely based structure depending on who applies to the team and how committed they are to stay for the school year. Still others have no formal membership per se, but have a number of individuals trained to conduct outreach activities as required.

Table 6: Method of Team Recruitment

Method	Percent
students apply to team	80.1%
referral from teaching staff	61.7%
classroom visitations	61.2%
word of mouth (referral from students)	58.2%
posters	56.7%
public address announcements	46.8%
assembly presentations	28.4%
letters, pamphlets, brochures	20.9%
orientation workshop	14.4%
information booth	5.0%
no recruitment required	2.5%
other	17.4%

Peer Support teams vary in size from school to school, from small organized groups of less than ten, to large informal "teams" of more than two hundred. While these large teams are quite different in comparison to the vast majority of Peer Support programs, they do share activities which are similar to that of more smaller memberships. Although it is clear that these large programs are more effective in reaching students through training than through actual program activities, it is understood that they may benefit the most from training.

In total, the survey identified 3,453 active student participants serving as Peer Support team members in Alberta. Almost all of these individuals received Peer Support training and likely benefited personally from the training process and helping role. More important, perhaps, is the indirect effect that Peer Support outreach and structured activities have on the larger student population.

The average size of teams is 17 (mean 17, median 13, mode 12), although nearly two-thirds of teams have 15 members or less involved in activities. The mean average is slightly skewed due to the presence of very large teams included in the sample. Team sizes are largely dictated by the size of the school, the school's particular needs, and the time and resources available to the team leader. The smallest team identified had 2 members, and the largest had a membership of 210 students. Table 7 shows the variation in team size across the province.

Most team members appear to be new members recruited this year, and very few students return from a previous year to carry on their roles as team members. The percentage ratio of new to returning team members in Alberta is 2:1, based on mean averages.

Table 7: Peer Support Team Membership

Team Size	Number	Percent (n=200)
1-5 members	8	4.0%
6-10 members	47	23.5%
11-15 members	70	35.0%
16-20 members	43	21.5%
21-25 members	4	7.0%
more than 25 members	18	9.0%

There appears to be a considerable imbalance between males and females in the selection of team members. Most teams are composed almost entirely of female students, as male students are not involved in the program to any great extent. Table 8 shows the number of Peer Support participants by gender. The percentage ratio of female to male team members across the province is 2:1, based on mean averages. More than 75% of teams have 5 members or less who are male.

Table 8: Peer Support Membership by Gender

Gender	Number	Percent
Female students	2305	66.7%
Male students	984	28.5%
Gender not identifed	164	4.8%
TOTAL	3453	100.0%

The largest number of Peer Support team members are recruited from grades 8 and 9, while the fewest number are drawn from the ranks of grade 12 students. Of course, this is largely due to the fact that more than half of the programs surveyed serve the junior high grades 7 to 9. Many schools with combined elementary and junior high grades stated they have grade 6 members on their teams.

3.1.4 Training and Activities

Training seeks to increase the skill and ability of team members to effectively communicate with fellow students and provide referral if required. Not only does training provide students with specific helping skills for their Peer Support role, but it also encourages development and competence of the team members themselves.

Initial training for students in Peer Support include a number of activities (Table 9). Orientation for students is most likely in the form of training retreats (72%), weekly training (69.5%), and training/activities combined (57%). Only 1.5% of teams had no training prior to assigned activities.

Table 9: Method of Team Training

Method	Percent
training retreat	72.0%
weekly training	69.5%
training/activities combined	57.0%
guest speakers	42.0%
informal instruction	36.0%
lecture/seminar	31.0%
one-to-one orientation/interview	29.5%
formal course or tutorial	18.0%
observe an experienced team member	17.0%
no training	1.5%
other	9.0%

Students are made aware of Peer Support team members and the services they provide in the school through a number of methods (Table 10). The most commonly used methods of promotion include word of mouth (75.5%), posters (73.5%), classroom visitations (65.5%), and public address announcements (55%). Other methods include displays of team member pictures, through the school newspaper, t-shirts, and special events and activities which increase team visibility.

Peer Support teams are involved in a number of ongoing activities. As indicated in Table 11, the most frequent activities reported include informal support (79.7%), informal counselling (74.3%), school spirit (70.8%), new student orientation (70.3%), and fundraising (57.9%). As well, a number of Peer Support activities and events either offer a service or provide benefits to the community at large, rather than focusing solely within the school.

Table 10: Method of Team Promotion

Method	Percent
word of mouth (referral from students)	75.5%
posters	73.5%
classroom visitations	65.5%
public address announcements	55.0%
assembly presentations	44.5%
referral from teaching staff	36.0%
letters, pamphlets, brochures	20.0%
information booth	10.0%
orientation workshop	8.5%
no promotion required	3.0%
other	19.5%

Peer Support team members are made available to students in school through a number of places and facilities in the school. Working the halls and classrooms was mentioned by 75.6%, staffing a counselling office was mentioned by 22.8%, and 10.9% of programs staff a drop-in centre. It appears that very few schools make available a specific location where students can go in search of Peer Support team members.

Table 11: Type of Ongoing Activities

Activity	Percent
informal support	79.7%
informal counselling	74.3%
school spirit	70.8%
new student orientation	70.3%
fundraising	57.9%
special topics' workshops	45.5%
pairing of helper with student	39.6%
tutoring	36.6%
classroom visits	31.7%
community work	28.2%
field trips	18.8%
other	14.9%

3.1.5 Resources and Support

Resources provide the creative and intellectual means to develop the Peer Support team, and support systems serve as counsellors, supporters, and motivators for facilitators to develop in their roles.

Peer Support training materials and resources used in the program include a number of resources, most particularly the Peer Support materials produced by AADAC (Table 12). Peer Support: Teacher's Resource is used by 89.6% of facilitators, although the companion Peer Support: Designing Interpersonal Skills appears to be less popular among facilitators. Only 48.3% reported it as a resource used in their program.

The need for additional resources was exhibited by the extent of "home grown" materials created by instructors (49.8%), networks (25.4%), and students (17.9%) above and beyond AADAC's program package. It may be that these resources respond to local needs. However, it also may be that facilitators are unaware of existing materials or else they find that these materials do not meet current needs.

Table 12: Training Materials and Resources

Training Resource	Percent
Peer Support Teacher's Resource, AADAC	89.6%
Peer Counselling Project, Dr. Rey Carr	55.7%
guest speakers	51.2%
instructor created materials	49.8%
Designing Interpersonal Skills, AADAC	48.3%
other Peer Support/counselling packages	26.4%
network/support group created materials	25.4%
audio cassettes, videotapes	22.4%
resource library	18.9%
student created materials	17.9%
other	10.9%

Most Peer Support programs rely upon some form of support system to help with their program, although there appears to be a lack of regional or local support networks in many areas where Peer Support team leaders can turn to for information, assistance, or advice. Of those responding, 42.6% stated they belonged to a formal Peer Support network. An additional 56.9% cited an informal support system provided assistance and 56.4% identified support from within the school system. Many respondents, moreover, stated they received support from more than one of these organizations. Very few program facilitators (6.9%) stated they had no support system of any kind available to them.

In addition to AADAC, there are other agencies which play a significant role in Peer Support programs in Alberta. Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) provide ongoing support and assistance to programs in certain rural areas of the province. In some instances, FCSS youth workers serve as the program facilitator for Peer Support in schools where no staff members are available to fulfil the role.

Operational funding of Peer Support programs include a number of innovative and interesting sources. As summarized in Table 13, most are assisted through AADAC (59.6%), through the schools (58%), and through fundraising events (54.4%). In some schools, a parent council organization provides funding and in other schools the students themselves pay for various expenses. Most schools use a combination of sources to finance their program rather than depend on a single source.

Table 13: Sources of Operational Funding

Funding Source	Percent
AADAC	59.6%
school/school district	58.0%
fundraising events	54.4%
student council	25.4%
municipal government (i.e. FCSS)	9.8%
service clubs, private individuals	9.3%
other provincial government departments	5.2%
other agencies	4.1%
corporate funding	.5%
other	12.4%

According to those surveyed, organizations involved with the program include AADAC, FCSS, and various service groups in their community. The bulk of the program assistance provided is in the form of financial support. The vast majority of programs, however, do not have another organization involved with the operation of their Peer Support program.

3.1.6 Schools Without Peer Support

Although not a major focus of this study, some insight into schools without Peer Support was obtained from the survey and from a questionnaire sent separately to junior and senior high school principals. More than twenty Peer Support programs are planned for the upcoming school year according to the Peer Support Questionnaire. Many have already selected program facilitators and selected teams for the upcoming school year. Of those schools which did not have a program, 44.8% or 133 principals reported they were thinking about starting a Peer Support program in the future, although the degree to which

these plans will be carried out was not determined.

In addition to schools planning new programs, there are also a number of schools which have discontinued Peer Support for various reasons. Of those who did not have a program, only 13.8% representing 40 schools stated they had a program at one time. Programs are usually discontinued due to problems associated with program relevance, effectiveness or duplication, due to staffing problems, or due to operational difficulties such as funding or time constraints.

Problems associated with lack of relevance or effectiveness bring into question the appropriateness of expanding the program into schools without an assessment of need being conducted prior to program implementation. Program may not fail if it is determined beforehand that the implementation is appropriate, that the program is not a duplication of existing activities, and that school support and resources are present and available.

Problems associated with staffing problems, particularly the loss of a trained facilitator, highlight the need for additional training of co-facilitators or alternates to replace teachers lost by attrition. Schools which do not have a program cited they lacked the appropriately trained staff, or that they had a program but their team leader left and they could not find a qualified replacement. The program will more likely survive from school year to school year if it is staffed with at least two persons per program.

Finally, problems associated with operational difficulties emphasize the need to consolidate existing programs through adequate funding, resources, and technical assistance. Peer Support may be a program which is essentially "given away" to local schools to operate, but it is also a program which needs to be periodically examined and monitored in its development. The program will become more viable if it is provided with substantial support in subsequent years following implementation through AADAC offices, Peer Support network organizations, and other community support agencies.

3.2 Regional Results

As shown in Table 14, the Central Division has more than half (50.5%) of Peer Support programs in the province identified by the survey. This region includes 65 programs in Edmonton and 18 in Red Deer. The Northern Division of the province is second in the number of programs with 52 identified. There are slightly more programs in the Northeast District than in the Northwest, due in part to 18 programs in Fort McMurray. Southern Alberta appears to have the fewest number of programs at 49, including 31 programs in Calgary.

Table 14: Peer Support Programs by Region

AADAC Service Division	Number	Percent
Northwest District	22	10.8%
Northeast District	30	14.7%
Central Division	103	50.5%
South Division	49	24.0%
Total	204	100%

Table 15 shows a more detailed breakdown of the province through the number of programs identified by AADAC Offices. As indicated, High Level, Edson, Hinton, and the Crowsnest Pass service areas have the fewest number of programs as identified by the survey. It is interesting to note, however, that Peer Support is truly a province-wide program and all AADAC service areas are represented in the study.

In terms of the number of participants by region, the Central Division has 52% of Peer Support participants identified. The Southern Division is second with nearly 28% of participants and the Northern Division has 20% of active Peer Support members. The Northeast District has slightly more Peer Support members than the Northwest, due in part to the extent of activity in Fort McMurray. There are slightly more males than females on Peer Support teams as one goes from north to south, but overall females still far outnumber males in participation.

With respect to specific service areas, Edmonton (1249), Calgary (722), Red Deer (296), Lethbridge (107) and Fort McMurray (101) have the largest numbers. Generally speaking, team sizes on average tend to be larger as one goes from north to south. The largest individual teams, however, are in Edmonton (210, 80, 60), Calgary (150, 90), Hinton (40) and Red Deer (40).

Table 15: Peer Support Programs by Area Office

AADAC Office	Number	Percent
NORTHERN DIVISION		
NW District		
Grande Prairie	5	2.5%
High Level	1	.5%
High Prairie	6	2.9%
Peace River	6	2.9%
Slave Lake	2	1.0%
Whitecourt	2	1.0%
NE District		
Athabasca	3	1.5%
Barrhead	6	2.9%
Fort McMurray	8	3.9%
Grande Centre	6	2.9%
Lac La Biche	3	1.5%
St. Paul	4	2.0%
CENTRAL DIVISION		
Camrose	5	2.5%
Drayton Valley	6	2.9%
Edmonton	65	32.0%
Edson	1	.5%
Hinton	1	.5%
Provost	5	2.5%
Red Deer	18	8.8%
Stettler	2	1.0%
SOUTHERN DIVISION		
Brooks	2	1.0%
Calgary	31	15.2%
Crowsnest Pass	1	.5%
Drumheller	6	2.9%
Lethbridge	7	3.4%
Medicine Hat	2	1.0%
Total	204	100%

In terms of program longevity, programs on average tend to be more established as one goes from north to south. The Northwest District has relatively new programs in comparison with the rest of the province at 1.9 years on average. The Northeast is next in seniority on average at 2.7 years. The Central Division is at 3.2 years, and the Southern Division has the most senior programs on average at 3.5 years. The most senior Peer Support teams identified, however, are in Red Deer (15 and 9 years), Lac La Biche (11 years), and Edmonton (9 years). In comparison, the average length of time programs have been in operation provincially is 3 years.

In areas of program recruitment, training and activities, there appears to be little variation among regions. Only with respect to resources and support are differences noted to any meaningful extent. Not surprisingly, larger centres appear to have a wider variety of resources, both financial and material, available to them than their rural counterparts. These differences appear to be the result of greater access to support systems in certain areas, particularly the assistance of regional networks in linking programs together.

Although programs in major centres cited involvement with a network, it is the lesser populated areas which provide greater insight into the impact of supportive agencies on programs. High Prairie and Grand Centre are cases in point where a number of programs have been implemented successfully in more rural areas. Clearly, the most viable programs emerge in areas where support from a Peer Support network or FCSS is active and working in conjunction with AADAC.

In terms of funding sources, schools, school boards and AADAC provide considerable assistance in Edmonton and Calgary service areas. Most interesting, however, is the use of fundraising events as sources of operational funding. In Edmonton, 28 programs cited fundraising as a source, Calgary cited 16 programs, and 14 programs were identified in Red Deer. It appears likely that networking in these areas provides a forum for an exchange of ideas in fundraising approaches.

The use of certain resources and materials also appear to be affected by the presence of networking organizations, particularly in the larger centers. The use of Dr. Rey Carr's Peer Counselling Project is cited in 50 of 65 Edmonton programs identified, by 21 of 31 programs identified in Calgary, and little cited elsewhere to any great extent. Guest speakers are available in 26 Edmonton programs, 20 Calgary programs, 8 Red Deer programs but not used as a resource to any major extent elsewhere.

Finally, the use of instructor created materials, network or support group created materials, and to a lesser extent student created materials were most frequently cited in Edmonton, Calgary, and Red Deer than anywhere else. The presence of networks in assisting the exchange of materials, resources and ideas is clearly evident.

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Peer Support has made significant gains in the province over the past ten years, and it appears as though the program will continue to expand in Alberta schools in the forseeable future. The survey identified more than 200 active programs in the province, many being planned, and many schools thinking about adopting such a program in their schools. The program as it currently exists has many benefits to schools, to students, and to AADAC itself. Peer Support appears to hold much potential to promote a positive school atmosphere, personal growth and development in youth, and in fostering adolescent alcohol and drug prevention goals.

There are three major conclusions which can be drawn from the study. Essentially, the findings of the study point to the rapid growth of Peer Support and the need for a long-term strategy for this expansion, the need to provide greater information and advice at the local level, and the need to expand the role of AADAC to address certain deficiencies identified by facilitators as obstacles to program development.

First, results indicate that the program is undergoing rapid growth and will continue to do so in the future. Peer Support is a program of great value and benefit to those involved. The viability of these programs, however, will be determined by the resources and support made available to them by AADAC or by some other interested agency. The role of support agencies, particlularly AADAC, in providing assistance to these emerging teams is often critical to the success or failure of the program.

Second, there is a need at the program level for greater information and advice on an ongoing basis about Peer Support, about new techniques and innovations, and about what goes on in other programs. Although AADAC field staff and regional networks provide some of this information, it needs to be enhanced to make programs more successful once they have been established.

Third, it is clear that a more proactive role is required to link programs together, to identify common needs, and to resolve common problems. Enhanced communications can provide a greater opportunity for program participants to learn from each other, to share innovative techniques and approaches to the program, and to become self-sufficient in funding and resource development. It is in the best interests of the programs involved and AADAC to encourage program facilitators to work together to identify common needs, to articulate those needs and to either find solutions from within their ranks or to seek assistance from a support agency.

4.2 Recommendations

Based upon the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested

regarding AADAC's participation in Peer Support:

Recommendation #1: AADAC should continue its present involvement in and support of Peer Support.

Rationale: The program's rapid growth, wide acceptance, and limited cost are definite assets and reasons to justify continued involvement in and support of Peer Support in Alberta secondary schools. AADAC's role is generally perceived to be favorable according to respondents, particularly the efforts of AADAC's field staff in their consultative role. More important, however, is the fact that adolescent alcohol and drug prevention goals are being attained in each program which has been successfully implemented. Whether through training as Peer Support team members or through receiving help from activities conducted by team members, the program appears to reach its intended audience most effectively.

Recommendation #2: AADAC should enhance its efforts to promote Peer Support in Alberta secondary schools.

Rationale: Most facilitators first hear of the program though personal contacts rather than through AADAC or some educational organization. AADAC could promote the program more effectively than it does at present. AADAC should develop a strategy to communicate its perspectives on Peer Support to schools, particularly those areas in the north and south of the province where the program is not well established. This approach would supplement existing methods by which individuals first learn of Peer Support, and would provide an opportunity for AADAC to express its views directly at a general informational level.

Recommendation #3: AADAC should encourage program stability by addressing certain ongoing support needs such as training opportunities and funding alternatives.

Rationale: Although most basic needs are met by AADAC, there are certain areas in which greater assistance, information and advice could be provided to programs once they become established. In particular, training support and material resources are cited as important ways to enhance stability. A majority of facilitators identified advanced Peer Support training and workshops in special topics to be of greatest interest. AADAC should provide information and advice to program leaders on how to find alternative funding sources once initial funding has ended. In particular, information on fundraising activities or local sources of funding such as service clubs should be provided.

Recommendation #4: AADAC should establish a mechanism to communicate with all active Peer Support programs.

Rationale: There is an expressed need from written comments of facilitators that

communications should be enhanced. There is a need to disseminate information from AADAC and innovations from the field about Peer Support. This mechanism would expand the informational and support role which is presently provided by AADAC field staff and regional networks. The mechanism would facilitate an exchange of ideas, a sharing of problems, connect participants to the program and instill a sense of community to program facilitators.

Recommendation #5: AADAC should encourage the integration of Peer Support programs though support of local and regional networks.

Rationale: The value of local and regional networks in providing program support is clearly evident from the survey. Networks provide a mechanism to help program facilitators to communicate with each other, and to help consolidate existing programs. They help to expand the informational and support role which is presently provided by AADAC field staff and informal support systems. Moreover, they help to facilitate an exchange of ideas, a sharing of problems, connect participants to the program and instill a sense of community to program facilitators. It would also provide members with a shared forum for discussion and innovation, and address issues of team leader motivation and recognition which have been identified.

Recommendation #6: AADAC should suggest approaches to recruit more males as team members.

Rationale: Two-thirds of participants identified are females, according to the survey. Peer Support teams are supposed to represent the entire school population and be accessible to all students. Rey Carr suggests in "Theory and Practice of Peer Counselling" that the imbalance can be improved by encouraging females to directly recruit or talk to male students. Other programs have developed "affirmative action" policies for males in Peer Support to ensure a gender balance on their team. These techniques for encouraging male participation should be promoted and shared with other programs.

Recommendation #7: AADAC should clarify the difference between support and counselling.

Rationale: Both informal support and informal counselling were cited by over seventy percent of respondents as types of ongoing activities conducted by their teams. Counselling, however, is not supposed to be a part of Peer Support's helping role. The program's mandate is to provide support and referral for counselling by qualified professionals. There is a concern regarding the ability of Peers to effectively judge the boundary between support and counselling in working with students. Peer Support intervention needs to be more clearly defined so that team members do not adopt a counselling role which may far exceed their training and experience.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF SCHOOLS WITH ACTIVE PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS

LIST OF SCHOOLS WITH ACTIVE PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS
For the 1990-91 School Year

NORTHERN DIVISION

NW District

Grande Prairie
Crooked Creek, Ridgevalley School
Grande Prairie, Crystal Park School
Grande Prairie, Alexander Forbes School
Sexsmith, Sexsmith Secondary School
Valleyview, Hillside High School

High Level
High Level, High Level Public School
McLellan, Ecole Providence School

High Prairie
Donnelly, Georges P. Vanier School
Falher, Routhier Community School
Girouxville, Ecole Heritage
High Prairie, E. W. Pratt School
High Prairie, Prairie River Junior High School

Peace River
Berwyn, Lloyd Garrison School
Hines Creek, Hines Creek High School
Manning, Paul Rowe High School
Peace River, T. A. Norris School
Peace River, Peace River High School
Worsley, Worsley Central School

Slave Lake
Desmarais, Mistassiniy School
Slave Lake, Roland Michener Junior/Senior High School

Whitecourt
Mayerthorpe, Mayerthorpe Junior-Senior High School
Sanguido, Sanguido Junior-Senior High School

NE District

Athabasca
Athabasca, Edwin Parr Composite Community School
Boyle, Boyle School
Rochester, Rochester School

Barrhead
Barrhead, J.R. Harris Junior High School
Fort Assiniboine, Fort Assiniboine School
Swan Hills, Swan Hills School
Thorhild, County of Thorhild Central School
Westlock, Saint Mary School
Westlock, R. F. Staples Secondary School

Fort McMurray
Fort McMurray, Beacon Hill School
Fort McMurray, Father Patrick Mercredi Community High School
Fort McMurray, Dr. K. A. Clark School
Fort McMurray, Good Sheperd Community School
Fort McMurray, Westwood Community High School
Fort McMurray, St. John's Junior High School
Fort McMurray, St. Gabriel School
Fort McMurray, Westview School

Grand Centre
Bonnyville, Bonnyville Centralized High School
Bonnyville, Kehewin School
Cold Lake, Nelson Heights School
Grand Centre, Grand Centre High School
Grand Centre, Grand Centre Junior High School
Medley, Athabasca Junior High School

Lac La Biche
Lac La Biche, Dr. Swift Junior High School
Lac La Biche, Youth Assessment Centre Lac La Biche
Plamondon, Ecole Plamondon School

St. Paul
Malliag, Ecole Malliag Community School
Smoky Lake, H. A. Kostash School
St. Paul, Glen Avon Protestant School
Vilna, Vilna School

CENTRAL DIVISION

Camrose
Camrose, Camrose Lutheran University College
Camrose, Camrose Composite
Daysland, Lights Out Youth Centre
Hay Lakes, Hay Lakes School
Wetaskiwin, Clearvista Junior High School
Wetaskiwin, Wetaskiwin Composite High School
Wetaskiwin, Queen Elizabeth Junior High School
Wetaskiwin, St. Joseph School

Drayton Valley
Breton, Breton High School
Darwell, Darwell School
Drayton Valley, Frank Maddock High School
Onoway, Onoway Junior/Senior High School
Thorsby, Thorsby High School
Tomahawk, Tomahawk School
Warburg, Warburg School

Edmonton
Ardrossan, Ardrossan Junior/Senior High School
Beaumont, Ecole Secondaire-Beaumont-Composite
Beaumont, Ecole J. E. Lapointe School
Bon Accord, Lilian Schick School
Bruderheim, Bruderheim School
Devon, Riverview Middle School
Edmonton, Bonnie Doon High School
Edmonton, Stratford Junior High School
Edmonton, Jasper Place Composite High School
Edmonton, Westmount Junior High School
Edmonton, McKernan School
Edmonton, Ottewell Junior High School
Edmonton, Old Scona Academic High School
Edmonton, Vernon Barford Junior High School
Edmonton, Edith Rogers School
Edmonton, Mount Carmel School
Edmonton, Kenilworth Junior High School
Edmonton, Archbishop O'Leary High School
Edmonton, St. Rose School
Edmonton, M. E. LaZerte Composite High School
Edmonton, Victoria Composite High School
Edmonton, Britannia Junior High School
Edmonton, Ross Sheppard High School

Edmonton, Crestwood Elementary Junior High School
Edmonton, Queen Elizabeth High School
Edmonton, Hardisty School
Edmonton, Londonderry Junior High School
Edmonton, Dan Knott Junior High School
Edmonton, J. J. Bowlen School
Edmonton, Cardinal Leger Junior High School
Edmonton, J. Percy Page C. High School
Edmonton, Laurier Heights School
Edmonton, Harry Ainlay Composite High School
Edmonton, St. Francis Xavier School
Edmonton, Strathearn Community School
Edmonton, Rosslyn Junior High School
Edmonton, St. Joseph Composite School
Edmonton, T. D. Baker School
Edmonton, Ben Calf Robe Society
Edmonton, Elizabeth Seton School
Edmonton, Balwin Junior High School
Edmonton, Hillcrest Junior High School
Fort Saskatchewan, Fort Saskatchewan Junior High School
Fort Saskatchewan, Fort Saskatchewan High School
Gibbons, Landing Trail School
Lamont, Lamont Junior Senior High School
Leduc, Leduc Composite High School
Morinville, George H. Primeau School
Namao, Sturegon Composite High School
Namao, Namao School
New Sarepta, New Sarepta Community High School
Riviere Que Barre, Camilla School
Sherwood Park, Campbelltown School
Sherwood Park, Salisbury Composite School
Sherwood Park, Clover Bar Junior High School
Sherwood Park, Sherwood Heights School
Sherwood Park, Fultonvale Elementary - Junior High School
Sherwood Park, Bev Facy Composite High School
Sherwood Park, F. R. Haythorne Junior High School
Sherwood Park, Archbishop Jordan High School
Spruce Grove, Woodhaven Junior High School
Spruce Grove, Spruce Grove Composite High School
Spruce Grove, Broxton Park School
St. Albert, St. Albert High School
St. Albert, Sir George Simpson School
St. Albert, W. D. Cuts Community School
St. Albert, V. J. Maloney School
St. Albert, Paul Kane High School

St. Albert, Elmer S. Gish School
St. Albert, Sturgeon Heights School
St. Albert, Ecole Ste-Marguerite d'Youville
St. Albert, Bellerose Composite High School
Stony Plain, Blueberry Community School
Stony Plain, John Paul II School
Tofield, Tofield School
Vegreville, A. H. Horton Junior High School
Winterburn, Winterburn School
Winterburn, Graminia Community School

Edson
Edson, Jubilee Junior High School
Niton Junction, Niton Central School

Hinton
Hinton, Gerard Redmond Community Catholic School
Hinton, Harry Collinge High School
Grande Cache, Grande Cache Junior Senior High School

Provost
Hughendon, Hughendon Public School
Provost, Provost Public School
Provost, St. Thomas Aquanis School
Vermillion, J. R. Robson School
Wainwright, Blessed Sacrament School

Red Deer
Alix, Alix-MACC School
Blackfalds, Blackfalds School
College Heights, Parkview Adventist Academy
Condor, Condor Elementary School
Eckville, Eckville Junior/Senior High School
Innisfail, Innisfail Junior Senior High School
Lacombe, Nelson School
Lacombe, Lacombe Composite High School
Lacombe, Lacombe Junior High School
Leslieville, Leslieville Elementary School
Olds, Olds Elementary School
Olds, Olds Junior Senior High School
Penhold, Penhold School
Ponoka, Ponoka Composite High School
Red Deer, Normandeau School
Red Deer, River Glen School
Red Deer, Oriole Park Elementary School

Red Deer, Piper Creek Elementary School
Red Deer, West Park Junior High School
Red Deer, St. Patrick's Community School
Red Deer, Eastview Community School
Red Deer, Word of Life School
Red Deer, Central Junior High School
Red Deer, G. H. Dawe Community School
Red Deer, Lindsay Thurber Composite High School
Red Deer, Red Deer College
Rocky Mountain House, Lochearn Elementary School
Rocky Mountain House, Pioneer School
Sundre, Sundre Junior Senior High School
Sundrie, Sundrie Elementary School

Stettler
Stettler, Stettler Junior High School
Stettler, Waverly School

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Brooks
Bassano, Bassano School
Brooks, Brooks Composite High School

Calgary
Airdrie, George McDougall School
Calgary, Harold Panabaker Junior High School
Calgary, Don Bosco School
Calgary, Bishop Grandin High School
Calgary, Bishop Kidd Junior High School
Calgary, George P. Vanier Junior High
Calgary, Madeleine d'Houet
Calgary, Sir Winston Churchill High School
Calgary, Holy Cross School
Calgary, James Fowler High School
Calgary, John XXIII School
Calgary, David Thompson Junior High School
Calgary, King Edward Junior High School
Calgary, Van Horne High School
Calgary, Dr. G. M. Egbert Community School
Calgary, Mount Royal Junior High School
Calgary, Bishop Carroll High School
Calgary, Wilma Hansen Junior High School
Calgary, St. Matthews School
Calgary, St. Vincent De Paul Junior High School
Calgary, Branton Junior High School
Calgary, Queen Elizabeth High School
Calgary, Father Lacombe High School
Calgary, St. Rose of Lima School
Calgary, Louis Riel School
Calgary, Bishop Pinkham Junior High School
Calgary, Shaughnessy High School
Calgary, John Ware Junior High School
Calgary, Nickle Junior High School
Calgary, St. Margaret School
Calgary, Alternative High School
Calgary, Clarence Samson Junior High School
Strathmore, Strathmore High School

Crowsnest Pass
Blairmore, Isabelle Sellon School

Drumheller

Delia, Delia School
Drumheller, St. Antony's School
Drumheller, Drumheller Composite High School
Morrin, Morrin School
Oyen, South Central High School
Trochu, Trochu Valley School

Lethbridge
Fort Macleod, F. P. Walshe School
Fort Macleod, G. R. Davis School
Lethbridge, Allan Watson High School
Lethbridge, Gilbert Patterson Community School
Lethbridge, St. Francis Junior High School
Lethbridge, Wilson Junior High School
Lethbridge, Winston Churchill High School

Medicine Hat
Medicine Hat, McCoy High School
Medicine Hat, Medicine Hat High School

APPENDIX B

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions in order that we may determine how AADAC should be involved in Peer Support Programs.

This questionnaire is intended for those who have a Peer Support program currently in operation in their school.

If your school does not have a Peer Support program, please answer questions 1-5.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the envelope provided by June 14, 1991.

A. PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

1. Name of School: _____

2. Street address: _____

3. City: _____ Postal code: _____

4. Mailing address (if different): _____

5. City: _____ Postal code: _____

6. Name of program contact person(s): _____

_____

_____

7. Primary contact person's position title: _____

8. Name of school principal: _____

9. Telephone number of school: _____

10. FAX number of school (if applicable): _____

11. Is another organization involved with your program?

name of organization: _____

contact person: _____

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

12. State the range of grade levels that this program serves (eg. grades 7-9, 10-12, 7-12).

_____

13. (As of this year) How many years has this program been in operation?

_____

B. PROGRAM FACILITATORS

14. How did you find out about this program? (Select as many as apply)

___word of mouth
___another facilitator
___letter, newsletter, posted notice
___Peer Support activities in your school
___teacher's conferences, conventions
___school administration
___school board
___other, please indicate: _____

15. What type of formal training as a Peer Support facilitator have you had?

___no training
___self-trained
___AADAC training
___taught by an experienced facilitator
___other, please indicate: _____

16. What type of additional training as a Peer Support facilitator would you like to have?

___no further training
___general Peer Support training
___advanced Peer Support training
___program implementation
___special topics' workshops
___certification
___other, please indicate: _____

17. Do you receive formal recognition for your participation as a Peer Support facilitator?

___yes, please describe: _____
___no

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

18. How much time would you say you spend in an average week on the Peer Support program?

___no time at all
___less than 1 hour
___1-2 hours
___3-4 hours
___5-6 hours
___more than six hours

C. RECRUITMENT

19. How do you usually recruit your Peer Support team members?
(Select as many as apply)

___no recruitment required
___letters, pamphlets, brochures
___posters
___information booth
___public address announcements
___assembly presentations
___orientation workshop
___classroom visitations
___referral from teaching staff
___students apply to team
___word of mouth (referral from students)
___other,pleaseindicate:_____

20. Is your Peer Support program extracurricular or offered for academic credit?

___extracurricular
___credit based

21. As of this year, how many Peer Support team members are:

_____in the program (in total)
_____male
_____female
_____new members (this year)
_____returning members (from a previous year)
_____in each grade level:_____

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

D. TRAINING

22. Please indicate which of the phrases best describes initial Peer Support training for students in this program. (Select as many as apply)

___no training
___informal instruction
___one-to-one orientation/interview
___lecture/seminar
___guest speakers
___observe an experienced Peer Support team member
___formal course or tutorial
___training retreat
___weekly training
___training/activities combined
___other,pleaseindicate:_____

23. How much time is spent training Peer Support team members each year?

___none
___1-5 hours
___6-10 hours
___11-15 hours
___16 hours or more

E. ACTIVITIES

24. How are students made aware of Peer Support team members and the services they provide? (Select as many as apply)

___no promotion required
___letters, pamphlets, brochures
___posters
___information booth
___public address announcements
___assembly presentations
___orientation workshop
___classroom visitations
___referral from teaching staff
___word of mouth (referral from students)
___other,pleaseindicate:_____

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

25. What kind of ongoing activities is your Peer Support team involved in? (Select as many as apply)

___informal counselling
___informal support
___new student orientation
___tutoring
___pairing of helper with student
___classroom visits
___field trips
___fundraising
___special topics' workshops
___school spirit
___community work
___other,pleaseindicate:_____

26. How are Peer Support team members made available to students in your school? (Select as many as apply)

___staffing of counselling office
___staffing of drop-in centre
___working the halls/classrooms
___pairing of students with team members
___not at all
___other,pleaseindicate:_____

F. RESOURCES

27. What training materials and resources do you use in your program? (Select as many as apply)

___Peer Counselling Project, Dr. Rey Carr
___Peer Support Teacher's Resource, AADAC
___Designing Interpersonal Skills, AADAC
___other Peer Support/counselling packages
___audio cassettes, videotapes
___guest speakers
___network/support group created materials
___instructor created materials
___student created materials
___resource library
___other,pleaseindicate:_____

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

28. What type of support do you rely on for your Peer Support program? (Select as many as apply)

___a formal Peer Support network
___support from within the school system
___an informal support system
___no support system available

29. From which sources did your program receive operational funding? (Select as many as apply)

___school/school district
___corporate funding
___service clubs, private individuals
___fundraising events
___AADAC
___other provincial government departments
___municipal government (i.e. FCSS)
___other agencies
___student council
___other, please indicate: _____

30. Of those funding sources you mentioned, which made up the majority of the funding?

_____

31. Do you feel you need more help for this program from AADAC?

_____
_____
_____

32. Please add any additional comments you may have in the space provided.

_____
_____
_____

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire of Peer Support programs. Please return your completed questionnaire in the envelope provided by June 14, 1991.

APPENDIX C

PEER SUPPORT FACILITATOR COMMENTS

PEER SUPPORT FACILITATOR COMMENTS

Written comments were obtained from responses to the Peer Support Program Questionnaire about Peer Support and the role of AADAC. Comments received appear to centre around three main areas--financial support, the role of AADAC, and networking/communications. Following are some examples of the most common responses received.

1. Financial Support

"It would be very difficult to raise the funds we need for our retreat. In fact, without the funds we may have to eliminate the retreat."

"Retreat funding is our basic cost factor which has been covered by the 2 agencies mentioned (AADAC/FCSS)."

"Would like the financial help for training--otherwise we're OK."

"...the removal of funding does present problems for training."

"I understand the funding is gradually reduced and eliminated. I cannot see how the program will continue without major funding."

"It's difficult to raise funds for our training/planning retreat each fall. More funds from AADAC would help."

"Need continued financial support to assist with retreat costs."

"Sufficient funding for now--of course, this depends on what we as a team would like to do (i.e. conferences or retreats)."

"We have had financial support for two years to help with training retreat. I guess that is it. We'll have a tough time having the same kind of retreat without their assistance."

"Financial support to help the program start, together with initial sponsorship of programme workshop is highly desirable."

"I think it is important to continue funding this project."

"Our school is small and money is hard to generate, so yearly funding for retreats would be appreciated."

"Continuous funding would make the project more 'important' as viewed by administration."

retreat."

"Ideally we could certainly use more help, but we have taken more responsibility for fundraising this year (and) it has gone fairly well."

"Would love to have $ $ for further training. Our budget is severely limited because we are a new school."

"AADAC has been great with funding."

"Yes, funding is always a must, for any program to be very successful."

"Continued funding is needed desperately!!!"

"I do not have time for fundraising. The kids on the team should not have to pay for training weekend, etc. So money is a real issue. I have spent hours on the phone and have written many letters to various departments in our system, asking for financial help. No one has money to spare even though they all say that Peer Support is necessary in our schools."

"If Peer Support is to be a viable program we must retain full funding. AADAC and the teams must contact the government to receive full funding."

"The funding provided to start the project is a great help. Once Peer Support is started staff appreciates the value and funding is not as difficult to get."

"Much is accomplished without money, yet extra things could be done with greater financial resources."

"We are concerned that, with the gradual withdrawl of AADAC's support, we may have to cease operating in another year. We do not wish to have the group start to focus their energies on fundraising--this would detract from their primary objective."

2. The Role of AADAC

"AADAC (has) been very helpful as a resource and for training of leaders. They have not been requested to become involved at the school level as yet."

"AADAC has a lot of the expertise in place which is necessary for a program like Peer Support."

"AADAC has been more than helpful. Whenever I've asked for anything

they are there. Thank you."

"AADAC has been terrific!"
"AADAC has been great about providing information, resources and resource people. More training and a newsletter that shared ideas would be useful."

"They have been supportive in the past and I know they will always be there for us."

"We greatly appreciate AADAC's leadership role for PST. Also the funding."

"AADAC has been most helpful to this point. In addition to the funding they provide networking for all the teams, workshops and training opportunities."

"AADAC has been excellent. Help and support must be ongoing though."

"I think that AADAC is an excellent resource, with very appropriate and useful resources."

"I feel that AADAC is doing a fine job now. My concern would be losing the help and support we now receive from AADAC."

"I find AADAC resources generous and very essential--the local staff is very good about providing information & resource people--we would be lost if funding was recinded!"

"I would like to thank AADAC for their support and hope that it continues to be their mandate."

"AADAC's support keeps this kind of program going."

"AADAC has been extremely helpful--in providing materials, coordinating network meetings and providing funding. It is much appreciated."

"Thank you (AADAC) for carrying the ball and helping to make these programs viable! Vitally necessary! Positive!"

"We have really appreciated AADAC's support and encouragement. Many students have been helped and enriched by this program."

"AADAC (is) doing a fine job in promoting the 'Peer Support Project'. Keep up the good work."

students have been helped and enriched by this program."

"AADAC (is) doing a fine job in promoting the 'Peer Support Project'. Keep up the good work."

"We have been very fortunate to have worked closely with AADAC for a number of years and see that relationship continuing to grow."
"The support we have received from our AADAC office has been great."

"It is really good to know that AADAC is out there for a support. Thanks!"
"AADAC is the main reason Peer Support is such a strong team in so many schools (both in financial, moral, and organizational support). Without its current involvement, I doubt the program would continue to thrive as it is. Therefore, not necessarily more involvement, but most certainly, continued involvement."

"Thanks to AADAC for promoting this type of program which emphasizes teen self-direction and empowerment. It's a positive move into prevention oriented services along with treatment services. If we could have more ongoing support throughout the year we could make Peer Support live up to its potential."

"AADAC has played a major role in encouraging the establishment of Peer Support programs. The training provided to staff facilitators was essential."

"The way AADAC coordinates the Peer Support Network is great and the support of sharing what other people are doing, ideas, suggestions, etc. is really needed and appreciated. It is my wish that AADAC continue to provide opportunities for peer facilitators to meet as well as to support and encourage one another."

"A super program and thanks to the Alberta Government and AADAC for their continued support."

"Always find AADAC staff to be very helpful."

3. Networking/Communications

"I'd like help networking. Good program but it's hard to work in isolation."

"Short training workshops-handouts on activities that other school's organize etc. i.e. written communications--a newsletter perhaps."

"We need to sustain our own support network as facilitators. I feel the need for AADAC to offer an advanced workshop in this area. May info on keeping programs vital, avoiding burnout, etc."

"More training and a newsletter that shared ideas would be useful."

"AADAC tends to be involved with us when its a news making event but we tend to be working on our own--we are not even well informed of the provincially offered workshops, etc."

"I would like closer contact with AADAC to give my volunteers better knowledge in terms of services provided by AADAC and referral issues, etc."

"It would be good to have some regular contact. We need more networking opportunities and AADAC can be really helpful in that area."
"More help would always be welcome--especially in co-ordinating a network."

"New directions for the '90's."

"More networking with other leaders and students. Perhaps student newsletters/pen pal network for students."

"More networking with other schools--sharing ideas, problems, etc."

"Yes, regular contact would be appreciated. Also more advanced notice of when AADAC sponsored events are occuring."

"More networking sessions would be helpful."

"Monthly newsletter if possible. AADAC counsellor visitations each year."

"Would like to be updated on trends."

"We certainly could use help with ideas, suggestions, etc."

"We would like to hear about what is going on in other Peer Support programs."

"We had a good start but are rather unsure of where to go from here."

"AADAC has been very helpful but in the past 6 months we have had very limited contact (the Rep has been busy)."